

CONGRESS.

THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 1862.

IN SENATE.

Petitions and memorials were presented, as follows: By Mr. HALE: From John St. John, who professes to be well acquainted with steam navigation throughout the world, and believes that he can construct an ocean craft which can neither be burnt, nor sunk, (even if stove against icebergs or rocks,) nor blown up by its boilers, and which will average across the Indian Ocean in one hour. The memorialist will undertake to build the vessel, provided the Government will remunerate him in case of success; expresses so firmly his convictions on the subject that he only asks Congress to place in the deficiency bill a provision giving him and his associates, or their legal representatives, the sum of one million of dollars upon condition of his producing such a vessel within five years from the passage of the act, to be adjudged and reported on by a committee of five disinterested persons to be appointed by the President, on whose decision the Secretary of the Navy is to pay the money. The outline of Mr. St. John's plan is, to construct a vessel to be less than four thousand tons, forty rods long, and six wide; to draw only from five to six feet water when laden. She is to have two sets of boilers and engines, and four pairs of water-wheels; is to be of iron entirely, with iron finishing; to be keeled, ribbed, beamed, and caulked with plate iron, corrugated where proper, and made air-tight, forming air-chambers like the quills and bones of birds. The floors or decks will be double, having sectional air-chambers throughout, as will also the portions of the ship, including those forming the state-rooms, cabins, kitchen, and all other parts of the vessel, so that she will sink. She is also to be subdivided by water-tight partitions. Although five years are asked, the memorialist says he can accomplish the work in two; and although the condition of speed is fixed at the moderate rate of fifteen miles an hour, he has no doubt of accomplishing an average of from twenty to twenty-five miles an hour, besides having her shot-proof. He calls attention to the unhappy fate of the steamer President, and the English steamer lately burnt at sea, and hopes that these cases will speak in favor of the proposition, and induce the offer of the required sum to start it, particularly as the Government can suffer no loss if the vessel is not completed, while the offer might result in the greatest imaginable benefits to commerce.

By Mr. NORRIS: From the heirs of Maj. Gen. Starke, of the revolutionary war, asking to be allowed compensation on communication of the House of Representatives.

Mr. GWIN, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, to which was referred the memorial of the Legislature of Tennessee, asking that the navy yard at Memphis, in that State, may be completed according to the original plan submitted a report on the same, which was ordered to be passed.

[The report is favorable to the prayer, and says that an appropriation will be asked at some future time.]

Mr. BADGER asked the unanimous consent of the Senate to allow him to introduce a joint resolution granting the right of way to the Fayetteville and Central Plank Road, which having been given, he asked the still further indulgence of having it read a second time at once, and put it in its passage to the Committee on the subject.

Mr. GWIN, from the Committee on Naval Affairs, to which was referred the memorial of the Legislature of Tennessee, asking that the navy yard at Memphis, in that State, may be completed according to the original plan submitted a report on the same, which was ordered to be passed.

The resolution was then read as follows:

Resolved, That the right of way through the public land of the United States, for the purpose of constructing a plank road, from Fayetteville, North Carolina, to the State, or at least to a very large number of her inhabitants. Unless this road could be run through that part of the public lands connected with the arsenal, the company would have to make a long detour in order to get round, which would be attended with much expense, and with delay. Mr. B. hinted that as this was the first instance any grant of this kind had been asked for by his State, and which in this case asked for no alternate service, he hoped it might be passed.

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the bill of the House granting the right of way and making a donation of public land to the States of Mississippi and Louisiana, in aid of the construction of a railroad from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Mexico, to be placed in the State of Mississippi, to be placed in the State of Louisiana, and the bill and amendments were committed.

Also, from the same committee, to which was referred the bill of the House granting the right of way, and making a donation of public land to the States of Louisiana, Mississippi, and Arkansas, to be placed in the State of Louisiana, to be placed in the State of Mississippi, to be placed in the State of Arkansas, and the bill and amendments were committed.

Mr. MOORE, of Louisiana, submitted an amendment to this bill, having for its object the granting of the right of way only to one of these roads, without any donation of land.

The bill and amendments were committed.

Mr. FREEMAN, from the same committee, reported a bill granting to the States of Illinois and Indiana the right of way for a portion of the public lands, to aid in the construction of a railroad from Lafayette, Indiana, via Middleport, to LaPorte county, to the State of Illinois; which was read twice and committed.

Also, from the same committee, to which was referred the bill of the Senate, granting to the State of Arkansas the right of way and a portion of the public land to aid in the construction of a railroad from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Mexico, to be placed in the State of Mississippi, to be placed in the State of Louisiana, and the bill and amendments were committed.

Mr. NORRIS, from the same committee, reported a bill granting to the State of Louisiana the right of way and a portion of the public land to aid in the construction of a railroad from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Mexico, to be placed in the State of Mississippi, to be placed in the State of Louisiana, and the bill and amendments were committed.

Mr. GWIN, from the same committee, reported a bill granting to the State of Tennessee the right of way and a portion of the public land to aid in the construction of a railroad from the Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of Mexico, to be placed in the State of Mississippi, to be placed in the State of Louisiana, and the bill and amendments were committed.

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or elsewhere? Had they the right to give away the public treasury for the purpose of establishing charitable institutions in the States or any where else? If they had no right to give away the public money for such a purpose, what species of reasoning did they arrive at the conclusion that they possessed the right to give away the public lands, or any other public property, to create a great national alms-house? It struck him there was no distinction between the public lands and public property. This bill was the wildest scheme of socialism that the wildest socialist ever dreamed of.

The question was then taken on the amendment of the Committee on Agriculture, and it was rejected.

Mr. CAMPBELL, of Illinois, moved to strike out the words "and to insert, 'residents,' which had thought would have the effect of relieving the bill of an odious and unjust restriction.

Mr. HALL was opposed to the amendment, being of the opinion that the benefits of the bill should be confined to citizens of the United States. He then replied to the remarks of Mr. HOWARD as to the constitutionality of the bill.

The amendment was not agreed to.

Mr. ALLISON moved to strike out the words "who is the head of a family," declaring that, as the bill now stood, it would prohibit every bachelor from taking one of the public lands, and that he would not support the provisions of the bill. He wished them to have the same privilege as others.

Mr. JOHNSON, of Tennessee, replied to the remarks of Mr. HOWARD. The gentleman had denounced the bill as a scheme of Fourierism. When they looked at the bill, they would find that it was not a scheme of Fourierism, but a scheme of common sense. The gentleman had distinguished men of that State, who had distinguished himself in military as well as civil life, and who had almost spoken Texas into existence, and shed his blood, and perilled his life for that State, had come forward in the Senate with a proposition to give away the public lands. And yet the gentleman said that this was Fourierism! The gentleman had spoken of gratuities. How long had it been since Texas received ten millions at the hands of the Government?

The amendment of Mr. ALLISON was then rejected.

Mr. CLINGMAN moved to insert the words "United States" after the word "Congress," so that the bill should be titled to have issued to him by the Commissioner of Public Lands, a warrant of 160 acres of land, to be located in the same manner as that under which bounty land warrants heretofore issued have been located on any public lands in the United States subject to entry, the applicant being required to make proof of support of his claim in such manner and under such regulations as may be prescribed by the Secretary of the Interior.

Mr. C. said that it would be seen that his amendment was an important one. He did not exactly like the policy of the bill, but it was, to pass, he hoped, and he would in the manner he proposed to amend it. If they were to make a disposition of the public lands, he desired it to be an equitable one.

Mr. CARTER opposed the amendment on the ground that it would vitally affect the success of the bill.

The amendment of Mr. CLINGMAN was then rejected: Ayes 28, noes 89.

Mr. SACKETT moved to strike out all the limitations in the bill, and insert "that every citizen of the United States of the age of twenty-one years shall." &c. He said that the effect of the amendment would be to extend the public lands to twenty-five years of age, and he said that the effect of the amendment would be to extend the public lands to twenty-five years of age.

Mr. HOWARD was opposed to the amendment, as it tended to squander the lands to a greater extent than the original proposition. He then replied to the charge of Mr. JOHNSON of inconsistency, because the State of Texas at that time adopted a similar policy, and he stated the evil effect of that policy upon the country, which he said would be found one of the best arguments against the bill before the committee.

The amendment of Mr. SACKETT was then rejected.

Mr. CLARKE moved to strike out "free of cost," and insert "at fifty cents per acre," and he remarked that he had constitutional difficulties to this measure. It was an undecidable proposition that the public lands were a common fund for the benefit of all the people of all the States. If this was true, then whatever legislation was class legislation amounted to exclusive legislation, and was not in the interest of the public. He then stated that he also said to the expediency of the measure, and stated the effect it would have in his State.

Mr. CHANDLER replied to the remarks of Mr. CLARKE, as did also.

Mr. MOLOY, who expressed his surprise that any gentleman understanding Western interests should take such the view of the bill as the gentleman from Iowa, (Mr. CLARKE.) He considered such views, however honestly entertained, as he believed they certainly were, as suicidal to Western interests. He considered the gentleman from Iowa wrong in his position in relation to that State, and he thought that the gentleman from Iowa was wrong in his position in relation to that State.

Mr. DISNEY argued that the bill was constitutional; when

Mr. PARKER, of Indiana, moved to amend the amendment of Mr. CLARKE by reducing the sum to be charged for the public lands to twenty-five cents per acre, and he said that he thought that all the public lands should be open to every body who wished to make an actual settlement at this price, and was opposed to confining the settlement of these lands to heads of families.

The question being on the amendment of Mr. PARKER—On motion, the committee rose and the House adjourned.

FRIDAY, MAY 7, 1862.

IN SENATE.

Mr. HUNTER moved the rule setting apart Friday in each week for the consideration of private bills, to the exclusion of all other business, be passed.

Mr. BORLAND expressed the hope that the motion would not prevail. At an early period of the session they had passed a resolution by a very strong vote to devote one day in each week to the consideration of private bills, and if the motion which led to the measure at hand were adopted, it would be a retrograde step.

Mr. STANTON, of Kentucky, moved to amend the amendment of Mr. HUNTER, so that it should be "that Friday in each week shall be set apart for the consideration of private bills, and that no other business shall be taken up on that day."

The amendment of Mr. STANTON was then rejected: Ayes 21, noes 16.

Mr. HUNTER, it was decided in the affirmative: Ayes 21, noes 16.

LAND BILLS.